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FM AMCONSUL IZMIR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9204
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
INFO AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
AMCONSUL ADANA

UNCLAS IZMIR 0373

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [BEXP](#) [TU](#) [LY](#)

SUBJECT: LIBYANS RETURN TO IZMIR; THEY ARE WELCOME AS LONG AS
THEY BRING DOLLARS

[1](#)1. UNLIKE THE FIRST LIBYAN SHIP TO VISIT IZMIR AFTER A LONG HIATUS, WHICH ARRIVED WITHOUT FANFARE, (REFTEL), THE SECOND SHIP ARRIVED TO AN OFFICIAL GREETING BY THE MAYOR OF KONAK, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVERAL MERCHANT'S ASSOCIATIONS. THE DEBARKING PASSENGERS WERE MET BY THE MUNICIPALITY BAND AND LOCAL OFFICIALS WITH WELCOMING GIFTS. MAYOR SARISIN NOTED IN HIS REMARKS THAT AFTER SUCESSFUL MEETING WITH THE LIBYAN AMBASSADOR IN ANKARA, AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED FOR REGULAR LIBYAN FERRY VISITS TO IZMIR WITH A GOAL OF ONE SHIP A WEEK AND A PASSENGER TOTAL OF ALMOST TWO THOUSAND EACH MONTH. LOCAL OFFICIALS OPTIMISTICALLY HOPE THAT THE LIBYAN TOURISTS WILL LEAVE IZMIR MERCHANTS RICHER TO THE TUNE OF \$50 MILLION EACH MONTH.

[1](#)2. THE RESUMPTION OF THE LIBYAN FERRY SERVICE TO IZMIR IS WELCOMED BY MANY IZMIR MERCHANTS, MANY OF WHOM FIND BUSINESS SLOW, PARTLY DUE TO THE SLOW TOURIST SEASON. THESE LIBYAN FERRIES BRING SHOPPING TOURISTS WHO COME TO BUY EVERYTHING FROM STAPLES LIKE RICE AND FLOUR IN BULK, TO HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, CLOTHES AND LARGE APPLIANCES. THEY ALSO BRING THEIR CARS, OFTEN PUSHING THEM OFF THE FERRY FOR NEEDED REPAIRS. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT MANY LOCAL DENTISTS AND DOCTORS HAVE AN ACTIVE PRACTICE CATERING TO THESE LIBYAN TOURISTS.

[1](#)3. COMMENT: WHILE THE EXPECTATIONS OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM THESE LIBYAN SHOPPING TOURS ARE SOMEWHAT INFLATED, THEIR PRESENCE IS WELCOMED BY LOCAL MERCHANTS, ESPECIALLY DURING A SUMMER SEASON WHEN MANY RESIDENTS OF IZMIR PLAN VACATIONS INSTEAD OF PURCHASES, AND LEAVE FOR THEIR SUMMER QUARTERS ALONG THE SEA. WITH FEW TOURISTS THIS YEAR, LIBYAN DOLLARS ARE DOUBLY WELCOME.

ZAJAC